

# Shelepin Raising Eyebrows in Moscow

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MOSCOW, Feb. 12—For years Trud, the trade union daily, was one of the Soviet Union's most soporific newspapers — and this remained true for many months after the dynamic, mysterious Alexander Shelepin was assigned (demoted, some said) to head the trade unions in mid-1967.

In fact, for a long time it seemed that Shelepin—Politburo member, former Party Secretary, former Secret Police chief and youth leader—was having trouble even getting his name into his "own" paper, let alone airing his distinctive views.

In recent months, however, as older leaders seem to have been having their difficulties, the 50-year-old Shelepin has been making quite a comeback, and Trud has become required reading for local Kremlinologists. In the last fortnight particularly, Trud has more than repaid the specialists' attention.

## Contrast With Pravda

On Tuesday, for example, as Pravda commentator Evgenyi Grigoryev was spelling out and flatly approving East German prohibitions on travel to West Berlin, Trud front-paged a long double-column commentary by its German expert and long-time Bonn correspondent, Albert Grigoryants, which did no such thing. The Trud commentary took many of the obligatory potshots at Bonn's policy, and approved last week's East German protest note to Bonn, but went no further. Instead it concluded that "the time has come to sit down at the negotiating table" for a European security conference.

As essential for a European settlement, Grigoryants reiterated simply what were, two years ago, the Kremlin's famous three conditions: Recognition of the present European frontiers, denial of atomic weapons to West Germany and acknowledgement of "the fact of the existence of two German states."

## Corn Policy Criticized

East German boss Walter Ulbricht and other hardliners have in the meantime—and particularly since the Czechoslovak crisis—escalated

demands, adding new conditions each time Bonn has seemed interested in serious talks.

This interesting foray in foreign policy was matched by Trud Tuesday on the domestic front. It reported exclusively on disastrous hurricane and other troubles which have struck the grain-rich Kuban region. Eyebrows were raised by a discussion of what has happened in the Kuban to "Queen Corn" — former Premier Khrushchev's favorite product, on which he hoped to base a corn hog economy which would end Russia's periodic meat shortages.

The post-Khrushchev leadership sharply curtailed corn plantings and Trud explained how this had all gone much too far in the Kuban, where machinery for planting and harvesting corn had rotted and the soil-conserving qualities of corn were now badly needed. Trud did not bother to note what official statistics have disclosed recently — namely, the steady drop in Russia's hog population, despite various incentives adopted by the Brezhnev leadership since 1965.

## Brezhnev Played Down

Trud's view of Secretary General Brezhnev was made apparent a week ago, when the official communique on the visit of a Czechoslovak National Front delegation omitted his name while mentioning those of Shelepin and various other Soviet leaders. The Tass news agency had put out a separate bulletin on Brezhnev's meeting with the delegation's leader, and most newspapers the next day gave this bulletin about equal prominence with the official joint communique.

Not Trud. It placed the long communique at the top of page one and beneath it buried the Brezhnev announcement along with other social doings of the visiting Czechoslovakians — including two further mentions of Shelepin.

## Editorial on Leaders

Most intriguing of all for Trud readers, however, was last Sunday's front-page editorial on "The Authority of a Leader," which seemed to echo and extend veiled criticism earlier by the biweekly Partinaya Zhizn (Party Life). Trud declared:

"In our country a leader is deeply respected, because the Soviet people understand well what a heavy burden of responsibility he carries before the Party and the people, how great his obligations are, even if there is a small collective working under his leadership..."

"The authority of a Soviet leader is created and strengthened in live work, in constant contact with people. The more a leader knows and can do, the brighter his creative abilities are revealed, the more closely he is connected with his collective—the greater authority he enjoys..."

"It is not easy to win authority. And it is very important that the leader embody the best moral qualities of a Soviet person. Honesty and fairness, persistence and irreconcilability toward shortcomings, love of work and high principles—all these qualities must be combined within the leader of a collective..."

## Respect 'Easy to Lose'

"Just as it is difficult to earn the respect of people, it is just as easy to lose it. A leader must cherish his authority as the apple of his eye. And there is trouble if he starts to become dizzy with success, if he abuses his official position, if he gets puffed up and thinks he is infallible, if he stops consulting people and fails to show them concern and consideration. Regrettably, leaders today forget about this..."

Trud then discussed letters to the editor complaining of "administrators who have lost their feeling of responsibility to the collective," and cited the example of an obscure collective farm brigadier who was "arude with people" and removed from his post.

In these conditions, Trud concluded, the trade unions have a duty "to take measures in time" and "must work in close contact with economic leaders, help them in all ways..."

Western analysts will be scanning Trud with increasing attention in an effort to understand just what—and whom—Shelepin may have in mind.